

Director's Note

With this issue of *DVI Views* we formally kick off the countdown to our 100th birthday in the spring of 2009. We are also unveiling our centennial logo. We will be incorporating it into banners, displays, letterhead and other promotional items during our celebration. We are in debt to one of our volunteers and consumers, Ryan Higgins, who graciously agreed to develop the logo gratis.



Ryan, a multi-media design major at Wilmington University will be graduating with a B.S. in June of this year. He says his initial career goal is to find a job that will allow him to display his creative abilities, and also puts him, "outside of my normal realm of comfort". His long-term goal is to develop freelance design skills and transform those skills into his own successful design studio. According to Ryan, he chose to study multimedia design because it seemed like a natural fit. He acknowledges it might seem unorthodox for a person with low vision to choose to have a career in visual arts, but with the assistive technology that is available today, he says it makes a visual disability less of an issue.

In our **Events** section, please look for the centennial logo to denote special activities. A more up-to-date calendar may be viewed online at our website:

www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dvi/index.html

Sincerely,

Cynthia Lovell, Director



Focus on a Consumer: Anthony Cannon



*Anthony Cannon pictured
in front of Frankford
Elementary School*

Boundless optimism and enthusiasm, these are the first adjectives that come to mind when meeting 33 year old Anthony Cannon. Anthony, a married father of three, has been an off and on consumer of DVI for many years. He struggled as a youth in dealing with the effects of Retinitis Pigmentosa, and its resulting severely restricted field of vision.

Active and athletic as a young person, Anthony attended Georgetown Elementary school and played many sports. Due to problems with his vision, he had to give up doing some of the things he loved. As a result, his peers teased him and he became angry and resentful even, “weaning away”, from the help offered by DVI. Looking back now he says part of the problem was that he didn’t know how to disclose to others his visual problems. He didn’t look “disabled” but there were things he couldn’t do because of his eye disease and it was difficult for him to accept help.

About 8 years ago, Anthony started a job as a bus aide in the Head Start program at the Georgetown Community Action agency. He enjoyed his work with children, and he realized that they treated him as, “normal”. He later was accepted for a job at Telamon Corporation as a teacher’s aide working with 3 to 5 year olds and found that he loved it because it made him feel energized. At Telamon, he realized his leadership abilities by founding a program to help young fathers in the community with self-esteem and building relationships with their children.

During this period he re-established his relationship with DVI and started working with VR staff Stacey Bragg and Barbara Mallory. “If it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t be near the person I am now,” says Anthony. Even though he felt needed at Telamon and was successful, DVI staff helped him realize that he had higher aspirations. They

challenged him to clarify his goals and he recognized that he had a dream to help blind and disabled people, especially when it comes to how and when to disclose their visual disability.

With DVI assistance, he completed 41 typing and Microsoft education modules in a 3 month period. "Ed Jory was a miracle worker," said Anthony, referring to the DVI Milford Office Trainer. Anthony also completed coursework through the Hadley School for the Blind in areas such as Self Help Groups: Advanced Topics and Principles of Job Acquisition. With the assistance of VR staff, he developed his resume and began applying for a new job in the late summer of 2006. In September of that year, Anthony landed two jobs nearly simultaneously: he was hired as a student advisor and campus monitor for the Frankford Elementary School in the Indian River School District; and as a youth worker for the Oak Orchard Boys and Girls Club. His boundless energy serves him well in these positions, as his workday begins at the elementary school at 7:30 a.m. and doesn't end until after 6 p.m. when he finishes up at the Boys and Girls Club.

Anthony is proud of what he has accomplished so far, especially his creation of a, "Gentlemen's Club", for 5th grade boys at the Frankford school. The club's goal is to teach the importance of respect and responsibility to the boys, something that will be critical to their middle school success. He is quick to give credit to DVI for what he himself has accomplished: "I wouldn't be where I am today if not for DVI. I call DVI family". Anthony has given back to the agency by conducting motivational speeches for other consumers, such as before a gathering of blind youth at Sunnybrook Camp in Millcreek.

His future goal is to own a recreational center where visually impaired and disabled youth can gather for activities such as sports and computer skills and where he could educate the youth and their families on how to deal with the unique challenges of being visually impaired. He would love to get them as inspired as he is himself, "I love being who I am. If I could see 20/20 I don't think I would be as successful".

FOCUS ON A DISEASE:

Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)

What is retinopathy of prematurity?

Retinopathy of prematurity (ROP) is a potentially blinding eye disorder that primarily affects premature infants weighing about 2 ³/₄ pounds (1,250 grams) or less that are born before 31 weeks of gestation (A full-term pregnancy has a gestation of 38-42 weeks).

How many infants have ROP?

Today, with advances in neonatal care, smaller and more premature infants are being saved. These infants are at a much higher risk for ROP. Not all babies who are premature develop ROP. There are approximately 3.9 million infants born in the U.S. each year; of those, about 28,000 weigh 2 ³/₄ pounds or less. About 14,000-16,000 of these infants are affected by some degree of ROP. The disease improves and leaves no permanent damage in milder cases of ROP. About 90 percent of all infants with ROP are in the milder category and do not need treatment. However, infants with more severe disease can develop impaired vision or even blindness. About 1,100-1,500 infants annually develop ROP that is severe enough to require medical treatment. About 400-600 infants each year in the US become legally blind from ROP.

What causes ROP?

ROP occurs when abnormal blood vessels grow and spread throughout the retina, the tissue that lines the back of the eye. These abnormal blood vessels are fragile and can leak, scarring the retina and pulling it out of position. This causes a retinal detachment. Retinal detachment is the main cause of visual impairment and blindness in ROP.



Are there different stages of ROP?

Yes. ROP is classified in five stages, ranging from mild (stage I) to severe (stage V). Most babies who develop ROP have stages I or II.

However, in a small number of babies, ROP worsens, sometimes very rapidly. Untreated ROP threatens to destroy vision.

How is ROP treated?

The most effective proven treatments for ROP are laser therapy or cryotherapy. Laser therapy, “burns away”, the periphery of the retina, which has no normal blood vessels. With cryotherapy, physicians use an instrument that generates freezing temperatures to briefly touch spots on the surface of the eye that overlie the periphery of the retina. Both laser treatment and cryotherapy destroy the peripheral areas of the retina, slowing or reversing the abnormal growth of blood vessels. Unfortunately, the treatments also destroy some side vision. This is done to save the most important part of our sight-the sharp, central vision we need for “straight ahead” activities such as reading, sewing, and driving.

What happens if treatment does not work?

While ROP treatment decreases the chances for vision loss, it does not always prevent it. Not all babies respond to ROP treatment and the disease may get worse. If treatment for ROP does not work, a retinal detachment may develop. Often, only

continued on page 17

“Deck the Halls” Art Contest Winners Announced

The Division’s Education Unit sponsored an art contest open to all its students statewide. Notification was made last spring with the stipulation that all submitted artwork must be in a two dimensional medium that allowed for framing.

Students were required to obtain written permission from their parents and were advised that the winning entries would be hung in the Division’s Administrative Offices and that winners would be featured in *DVI Views*.

The following is a list of winners along with their school and town of residence:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CATEGORY



**William “Billy” R. Grade 3,
John G. Leach School,
New Castle**

MIDDLE SCHOOL CATEGORY



**Cory C. Grade 6,
John G. Leach School,
Middletown**



**Kevin C. Grade 6,
Holy Rosary School,
Claymont**

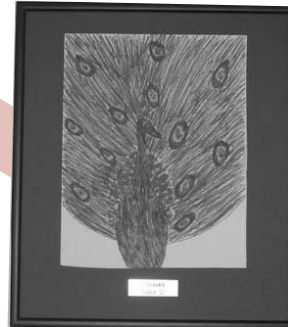


**Jessica V. Grade 7,
Shue-Medill Middle School,
Newark**

HIGH SCHOOL CATEGORY



Mariam N.
Grade 10,
Caesar Rodney
High School,
Smyrna



Stephanie C.
Grade 12,
Cape Henlopen
High School,
Lewes

Extra, Extra, Extra: Have You Heard?

Drexel University Researchers Seek Participants for Study!

This important study will report and describe the experiences of people with visual impairments as they use the visual medium of online learning. If you are over 18 years of age and meet the following requirements, please get involved by contacting the Drexel University researchers at: visualmediumstudy@gmail.com

Requirements:

- Have a documented visual impairment
- Be enrolled in a postsecondary online class
- Be willing to discuss your experiences taking online classes
- Be willing to be observed while working at online learning

Volunteer participants will have the opportunity to:

- Share your experiences
- Receive a \$25 Borders Gift Card upon completion

Your views and perspectives will be recorded in confidence without any reference to actual names or organizations.

..... ADVOCATES CORNER

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following article is written by Lainey Feingold an attorney and advocate for persons who are blind or visually impaired.*

Accessible Banking Services- Talking ATMs

October 2007 marks the eighth anniversary of the first U.S. Talking ATM. Today, as the result of advocacy efforts across the country by many individuals and blind organizations, we estimate that there are well over 50,000 Talking ATMs in this country, along with installations all over the world. In addition, banking websites are widely recognized to be among the most accessible websites in the private sector, and banking information is available in a variety of alternative formats.

Key to the on-going advocacy effort is people using the Talking ATMs, as well as other accessible banking services. On behalf of ACB (American Council of the Blind) affiliates and blind individuals around the country, we continue to monitor our agreements with major U.S. banks, including Bank of America, which has over 11,000 Talking ATMs currently installed, with more coming on-line each month. Other banks that have signed agreements as a result of the Structured Negotiations process are: Washington Mutual, Wells Fargo, Citibank, LaSalle, Citizens, Sovereign, Union Bank of California, First Union (now Wachovia) and Bank One (now Chase).

If you have never used a Talking ATM, on-line banking, or other accessibility services from these banks, we hope you will take this eight year, "Talking ATM anniversary", as an opportunity to do so. And, if you've encountered any problems with Talking ATMs or

websites from these institutions, or in getting needed alternative formats, we hope you will let us know, using the contact information below.

Talking ATMs can be found in public and private locations other than banks in all fifty states. Bank of America

Talking ATMs, for example, are in many airports around the country, and many banks have Talking ATMs on college campuses. Banking websites should allow you to search for your nearest Talking ATM.

Thanks for everyone's continuing efforts to make banking services accessible. Questions or comments or feedback on accessible banking services can be sent to Lfeingold@earthlink.net <<mailto:Lfeingold@earthlink.net>> or by calling toll free line at 800-822-5000.



1909

1919

1929

1939

1949

1959

History Timeline

DVI: A Century of Service - 1909 to 2009



C. Reginald Van Trump

1909 State legislature establishes Delaware Commission for the Blind; appropriates \$1,500. C. Reginald Van Trump elected as the first chairperson.

1911 Buildings purchased at 305-307 W. 8th St. in Wilmington.

1912 Commission establishes workshop for employment of blind workers.



Landis Lodge

under construction

1929 Through the generosity of Commission Chair Mrs. Irene DuPont, Camp Landis (later Landis Lodge) was developed.

1941-1953 World wide epidemic of Retrolental Fibroplasia (now known as Retinopathy of Prematurity, see article p. 4). 12,000 babies blinded in U.S.

1944 Commission launches the vocational rehabilitation program following Federal VR Act.

1950 Sunnybrook School for the Blind Opens

1952 Beatrice "Bea" Simonds hired as itinerant Instructor, beginning her 54 year association with the agency.

1970 Commission became part of the Department of Health and Social Services after a reorganization of Delaware state government.



305-307 W. 8th Street as it looked in 1920



Sunnybrook students 1955

1959

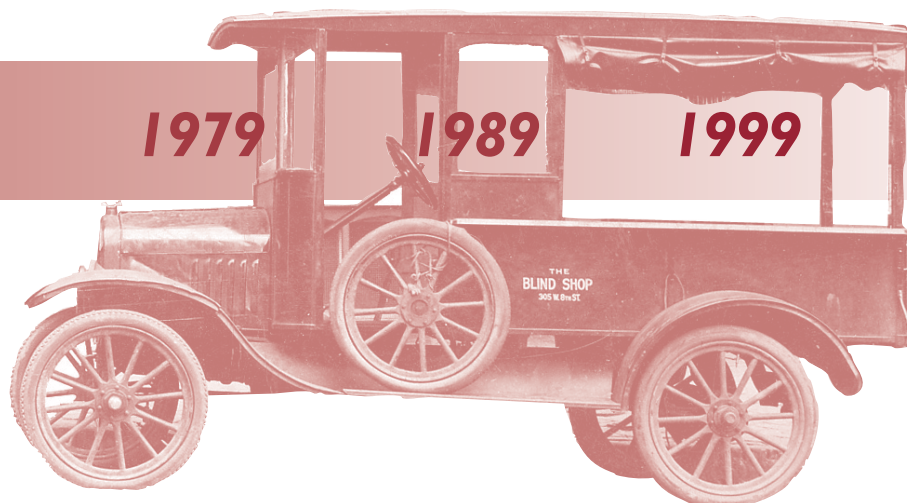
1969

1979

1989

1999

2009



Bea Simonds

1978 Under leadership of director, Mr. Norman Balot and advocacy of Ms. Simonds, legislation was enacted establishing the agency as the Division for the Visually Impaired.

1983 Delaware Industries for the Blind (DIB- formerly called the “workshop program”) expands with establishment of contracts with the Defense Department.

1989 Men with a Message program begins at Smyrna Prison, where inmates Braille books for blind students.

1994 DVI consolidates staff from several scattered sites in the Dover area to the annex of the Milford State Service Center.

2002 Remainder of West 8th Street staff moved to Biggs Building; Materials Center, which holds all the Braille and large print textbooks and equipment for Delaware’s students with visual impairment, moves to Cornell Business Park in New Castle.



Milford DVI office as it looks in 2008

*The DVI Logo Denotes
Centennial Activities*




EVENTS


These dates are subject to change.

*Please check the DVI website or call **302-255-9800** to confirm.*

MARCH

- 7** 11:00 a.m. - Governor's Advisory Council on the Blind, Belmont Hall, Smyrna.
- 20** 12:00 Noon. - State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind, Buena Vista Conference Center, New Castle.
- 20** 3:30 p.m. - State Use Law Commission, Biggs Building, New Castle.
- 22** 6:00 p.m. - DABA Ice Skating Party, State Fair Ice Arena, Harrington. 

APRIL

- TBD** DVI 99th Birthday Party, New Castle and Milford. 
- 4** 11:00 a.m. - Governor's Advisory Council on the Blind, Milford State Service Center Annex.
- 17** 3:30 p.m. - State Use Law Commission, Biggs Building, New Castle.

MAY

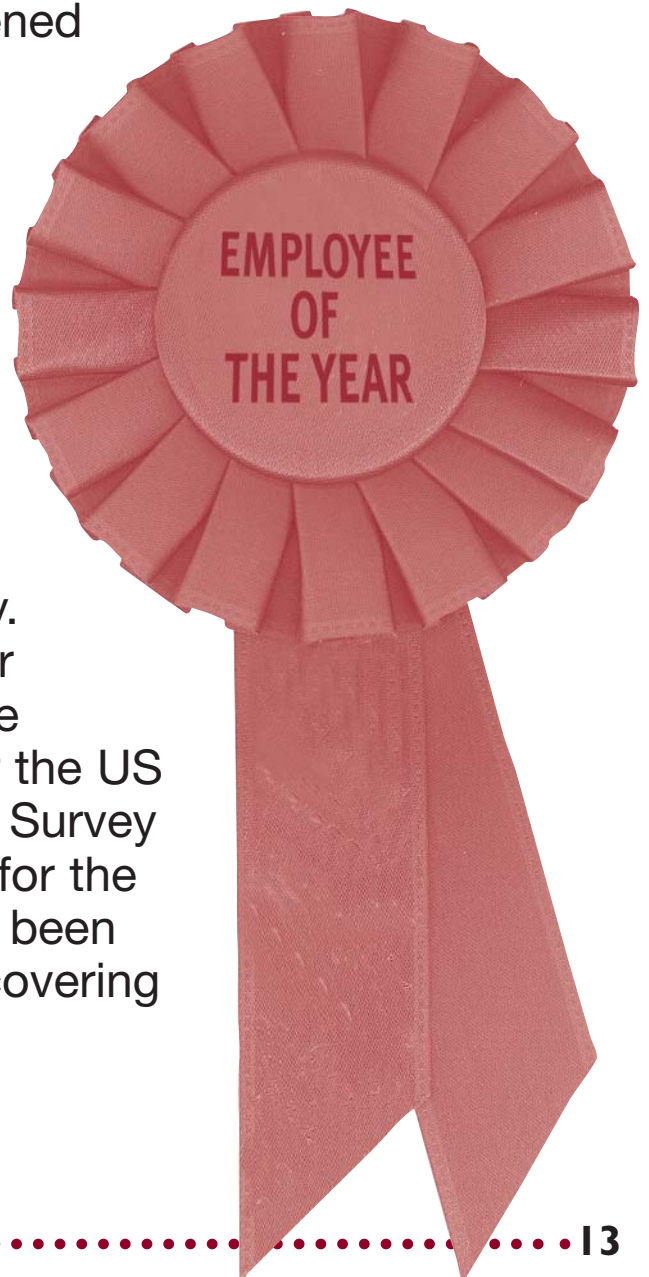
- 2** 11:00 a.m. - Governor's Advisory Council on the Blind, Belmont Hall, Smyrna.
- 15** 3:30 p.m. - State Use Law Commission, Biggs Building, New Castle.
- TBD** DVI, DHSS Campus Talent Show- 1901 N. Dupont Hwy, New Castle. 
- TBD** Family Fun Day, Date and locations to be determined. 

JUNE

- 6-8** Children's Beach House Weekend, Lewes.
- 19** 12:00 Noon - State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind, Community Legal Aid Society, 840 Walker Rd., Dover.
- 19** 3:30 p.m. - State Use Law Commission, Biggs Building, New Castle.
- 26** 6:00 p.m. - "DVI Day" at Blue Rocks, Wilmington. 

Delaware Industries for the Blind - Employee of the Year

Delaware Industries for the Blind is pleased to announce that **Alice Kendall** is our Employee of the Year for 2008. Alice has been with DIB since March 2001. She has held a number of positions since joining our team. When first arriving at DIB she was placed on our janitorial crew and later was employed as part of our desert neckerchief department. Alice always did a great job but was always interested in doing more. As new opportunities in customer service opened in our Custom Products Department, Alice expressed her interest. She interviewed several times as openings became available and took training classes to expand her potential for success. Based on her perseverance, training and excellent employment record, she was placed in customer service in September of 2004. In this job she has flourished in both her knowledge and responsibility. She has risen to the position of Senior Customer Service Representative. She handles very demanding accounts for the US Department of Interior, US Geological Survey and NASA as well as many accounts for the State of Delaware. Recently Alice has been given the additional responsibility of covering for her supervisor in her absence. CONGRATULATIONS Alice!



Interested in Learning New Techniques or Refreshing Your Skills?

Independent Living Services Offers The Following Workshops:

Working With a Visual Impairment

Ask our Vocational Team questions about strategies for successful employment and work related topics.

Computer Basics/Equipment Demonstration

Acquire a basic understanding of the computer. A variety of equipment will be displayed. Participants will also be able to try the different technology that is available. Vendor information will be provided.

Kitchen Skills and Table Techniques

Learn how to safely complete tasks while working in the kitchen and table techniques.

Adjustment and Support

Meet and greet other visually impaired persons. Talk with your peers about vision loss and resources.

Communication and Time Management

Learn about the variety of assistive devices and techniques that aid in writing, accessing print, time management, record keeping and more.

Personal Resource Management

Acquire skills dealing with money management (currency, financial transactions, budgeting, shopping).

Home Maintenance

Changing a light bulb, cleaning, and other maintenance related topics will be covered to assist with taking care of one's home or living space.

Self-Care

Learn techniques that will assist with good hygiene and health. Also learn how to apply make-up.

Low Vision

Overview of DVI's low vision program and a demonstration of low vision aids (i.e. magnifiers).

Labeling, Organizing, and Recording

Discover several ways to label and organize a variety of items. Also acquire different ways to record and retrieve information.

Safety Techniques

Acquire techniques that will assist you with safely moving around, accident prevention, and other home safety suggestions.

Community Resources

Acquire additional information about community resources such as Medicare, Diabetes Care, Talking Books, and Disaster Preparedness.

Crocheting, Quilting, Sewing

Acquire adapted techniques for crafts and resources for continued enjoyment.

Recreation Activities and Hobbies

Are you interested in modified games, playing cards, and sports activities?

Self-Advocacy

Discover ways to communicate your needs and speak up for yourself.

Eye Diseases and More

Acquire information about the most prevalent eye diseases (i.e. macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, etc) and the capabilities of those who have these eye diseases.

To register for a workshop or for additional information please call Scarlet Bolden at (302) 255-9818 or Debra Mills-Joe at (302) 255-9817.

Holloway Campus Lions Club “We Serve”



By: Agnes Quigley, 1st Vice President

On November 19, 2007 the Holloway Campus Lions Club kicked-off its annual holiday food/toy project to benefit the blind and visually impaired citizens throughout Delaware. DVI's direct service staff was asked to identify adults and children whom they felt may be unable to celebrate the joys of the holiday season due to financial

hardship. The Holloway Campus Lions Club, part of Lions International, is a separate service organization established in December 2005. Membership consists primarily of employees of the Division for the Visually Impaired and Delaware Industries for the Blind. This year 30 families received complete holiday dinners chock full of traditional holiday favorites. Of course, the featured star was a plump turkey nestled among all the trimmings. But we didn't stop there! Thanks to the expert guidance of DVI's own Teachers of the Visually Impaired, the Holloway Campus Lions presented toys geared to meet the specific needs of the 38 blind or visually impaired children who had been identified by DVI's education unit. We look forward to future projects that directly benefit the blind and visually impaired community we jointly serve.

FOCUS ON A DISEASE: Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)

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part of the retina detaches (stage IV). When this happens, no further treatments may be needed, since a partial detachment may remain the same or go away without treatment. However, in some instances, physicians may recommend treatment to try to prevent further advancement of the retinal detachment (stage V). If the center of the retina or the entire retina detaches, central vision is threatened, and surgery may be recommended to reattach the retina.

Are there other risk factors for ROP?

In addition to birth weight and how early a baby is born, other factors contributing to the risk of ROP include: anemia, blood transfusions, respiratory distress, breathing difficulties, and the overall health of the infant.

Can ROP cause other complications?

Yes. Infants with ROP are considered to be at higher risk for developing certain eye problems later in life, such as retinal detachment, myopia (nearsightedness), strabismus (crossed eyes), amblyopia (lazy eye), and glaucoma. In many cases, these eye problems can be treated or controlled.

National Eye Institute • 2020 Vision Place • Bethesda, MD 20892-3655 Content last reviewed December 2006 • (301) 496-5248
www.nei.nih.gov

Employee Recognition Awards

The DVI Recognition Committee is pleased to announce the most recent winners of the Semi-Annual Employee Recognition Award. For the second half of State Fiscal Year 2007, the award goes to the Senior Rehabilitation Instructors (SRI) of the Independent Living Services Program: **Jean May, Harold Webb, Joan Markow, Roxann Williams** and **Mary Tolbert**. These staff persons are being honored in recognition of their success at self-improvement, which has resulted in improved public service and for their noteworthy achievements.

According to their supervisor Elisha Jenkins, “Jean, Harold, Joan, Roxann and Mary have been working diligently to become certified as Vision Rehabilitation Therapists...This endeavor required them to complete 3-4 weeks of intensive training and testing. Currently, this is not a job requirement nor have they received additional compensation....As their supervisor, I can tell the difference that the training has made and am excited that their professional journey has taken them on a path that is supporting innovation and improved services to our consumers”.

For the first half of State Fiscal Year 2008, the award goes to Education Unit Administrator **Charlene Dolgos**. Her nomination was for achievements in numerous areas including:

- Recognition of a noteworthy achievement
- Innovative job-related ideas or actions demonstrated by the employee
- The person’s overall exemplary work performance over an extended period, and;
- Recognition of the employee’s personal and professional demeanor as a representative of DVI.



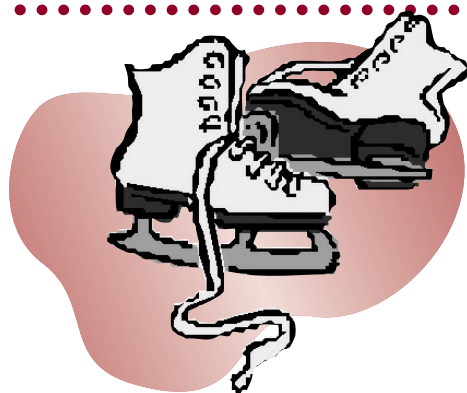
SRI Instructors from left: Mary Tolbert, Jean May, Roxann Williams, Harold Webb, Joan Markow

Specifically nominator Deputy Director Robert Goodhart cited, "I wish to nominate Charlene for her services to the students receiving educational services from DVI and employees in the various units of DVI

outside of the educational service program. Charlene has over a period of time collaborated, offered, and conducted multiple classes to interested DVI employees seeking the opportunity to learn grade level 1 Braille. This level of instruction has been well received by those participating as being beneficial to their ability to provide services to consumers. Instruction has led to individual employees being able to instruct individuals with recently acquired vision loss to be able to use Braille and special markings for labels, note taking etc".



Charlene Dolgos



Join Us for the 6th Annual Night of Ice Skating

Funded by: Delaware Association of Blind Athletes

Presented by: The Division for the Visually Impaired

Where: Delaware State Fair Ice Rink in Harrington

When: Saturday, March 22nd, 2008

Skating 6:00-8:00pm, Social Room open 6:00-8:30pm

Who: Visually Impaired (bring your family and friends)

Cost: \$1 per Person for those over 7 years old

(Includes skate rental and refreshments)

Please RSVP to Sharon at **424-7257** email

sharon.coutu@state.de.us or Shawn at

424-7258 or email **shawn.musgrove@state.de.us**

DVI VIEWS

Division for the Visually Impaired, Delaware Health and Social Services

Cynthia Lovell, Director **Bob Goodhart**, Deputy Director

Debra Simpson, Elisha Jenkins, Jack Holloway, Tanya Nicole Servis, Editorial Staff

<http://www.state.de.us/dhss/dvi/index.html>

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DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Biggs Building
1901 N. Dupont Highway
New Castle, DE 19720-1199

**FREE
MATTER
F/T
BLIND**